

Church Block
44 Front Street
Bath
Sagadahoc County
Maine

HABS No. ME-157

ME.

12. BATH

6-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. ME-157
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CHURCH BLOCK

Location: 44 Front Street, west side of street, Bath, Sagadahoc County, Maine

Present Owner: Sagadahoc Real Estate Association of Bath

Present Occupants: Bath Printers, Inc.; Fabric Loft; Coastal Economic Development Corporation; Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Present Use: Stores, community group headquarters

Statement of Significance: This Victorian brick business block has a first story cast-iron front, made at the Bath Iron Foundry. It was built in 1863 for Oliver Moses.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1863
2. Architect: Unknown
3. Original and subsequent owners: Sagadahoc County Registry of Deeds.

1860 Deed. May 7, 1860, recorded February 12, 1861.
Book 16; Page 481.

John T. Gilman, Benjamin Small, and David Mitchell,
of Bath, duly appointed and constituted agents of
the proprietors of the First Universalist Meeting
House in Bath
to
Oliver Moses and Thomas M. Curtis

1863 Deed. February 21, 1863, recorded February 23, 1863.
Book 18; Page 450.

Thomas M. Curtis
to
Oliver Moses

1891 Deed. February 24, 1891, recorded February 27, 1891.
Book 76; Page 410.

Galen C. Moses, Frank O. Moses, and Benjamin F. Har-
ris, trustees of the estate of Oliver Moses
to
Sagadahoc Real Estate Association of Bath

4. Builder: William Hogan laid the foundation. Oliver Moses of Bath financed the building. He owned it until his death in 1882.
5. Alterations and additions: A wooden bay window was added to the south side of the facade wall on the second and third stories, probably c. 1900.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

The Church Block replaced the First Universalist Meeting House, built in 1839, which was torn down, thus its name.

Oliver Moses was a prominent Bath shipbuilder, banker, and land holder. He was largely responsible for the erection of the new Universalist Church on Washington Street which replaced the one torn down for the Church Block.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: Photograph in the collection of the Bath Marine Museum, Bath, Maine.
2. Bibliography:
 - a. Primary and unpublished sources: Deeds. Sagadahoc County Registry of Deeds, 752 High Street, Bath, Maine, 04530.
 - b. Secondary and published sources: Daily Sentinel and Times (Bath, Maine), March 23, 24, 25, April 13, July 8, August 22, November 18, 1863; February 20, 1864.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This three-story, rectangular, brick and frame business block has brick trim and a first-floor cast-iron facade of pilasters, lintels, and brackets.
2. Condition of fabric: Good

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The Church Block is about 45 feet wide and 70 feet deep.
2. Foundations: Stone and granite

3. Wall construction: Brick exterior
4. Trim and finish: The facade of the Church Block has seven bays on the first floor. Eight cast-iron pilasters support arched cast-iron lintels which are separated by brackets located over the pilasters. The columns have capitals with leaves and rosettes; the lintels have recessed panels with an interlacing geometric motif; and the brackets have geometric and leaf patterns above a woman's face. The center bay is the entrance to the upper floors. The second and sixth bays contain first-floor store entrances.

The facade has five bays on the second and third floors. They are divided into three sections by raised brick pilasters. The center section contains one window on each floor; the outer two sections each contain two windows. The second-floor windows have round, keystoned brick arches connected by a string course. The third-floor windows have flatter, keystoned brick arches. The window sills are granite. The brick of the facade is painted.

The Church Block is joined on the north and south sides to other buildings. Originally two windows showed on the front corner of the northern side, on the second and third floors. They were identical in shape to the facade windows, but had no trim.

The rear of the Church Block has rectangular windows with granite lintels and sills. The original central first-floor door has been blocked in and a modern one inserted to the left. The brick of the rear wall is unpainted.

5. Chimneys: There are three brick chimneys--two in the southern side wall, one in the northern side wall.
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The facade doors were originally recessed between the cast-iron pilasters, with a granite block as the floor. The center and northern doors are recessed today. All doors are modern.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Except for the bay window replacing the left two bays, the upper facade windows are intact. The second-floor windows are double hung with six-light lower sashes and ten-light arched upper sashes. The third-floor windows are double hung with six-light sashes, the upper ones arched. The original first-floor facade windows in the first, third, fifth, and seventh bays have been replaced with modern windows of about the same dimensions.

The second and third-floor rear windows are intact. They are rectangular, double hung with six-light sashes. The first floor windows are modern.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape: The flat roof slopes slightly down from the facade to the rear.
- b. Cornice: On the facade the four raised pilasters are joined at the top by a wide flat brick band, forming an entablature. Pairs of wooden brackets above each pilaster support an overhanging molded wooden cornice. Between the brackets are wooden dentils joined in round arches below the cornice.

There is no cornice on the sides.

The rear wall has a slightly projecting molded wooden cornice.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: On the first floor a center front entryway contains stairs to the upper floors. To either side is a separate store, entered directly from the street. The second and third floors contain rooms of varying sizes.
2. Stairways: Wide straight-run wooden stairs lead from the small center front entry hall to a small rectangular hall at the center of the second floor. The stairs continue in a straight run to a small hall at the center rear of the third floor.
3. Flooring: Modern
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster, painted. The interior walls are frame.
5. Doors: The wooden doors have four or six recessed, molded panels.
6. Trim: Wood, painted. The window and door architraves are flat with one inner and two outer raised half round bands. There are flat baseboards.
7. Plumbing: In one bathroom the original marble counters, porcelain lavatories, and plumbing fittings are intact. A small wall plaque reads: "Foote Brothers, Plumbers, Gas and Steam Fitters, Bath, Maine."

8. Hardware: Some doors have the original ceramic door knobs.
9. Lighting: Electric

D. Site:

The Church Block occupies a prominent position on the busy Bath waterfront. It helps create a visual and physical continuity to Front Street, with other brick Victorian blocks and more modern brick business blocks.

Prepared by Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.
and
Mary-Eliza Wengren
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PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

These records were made during 1971 and 1972 in the course of a photo-data project in the cities of Bath, Hallowell, Monmouth, and Richmond in the State of Maine. The project was arranged in response to the initiative of Mrs. Linda B. Clark of Row House, Inc., in Hallowell, Dr. Charles E. Burden of the Bath Marine Museum, Mrs. Paul L. Roberts of the Richmond Historical and Cultural Society, and Mr. H. Earle Flanders of Monmouth. All of these preservationists actively solicited or contributed funds and effectively fostered increased interest in the architectural heritage of their respective communities. The project was under the general direction of James C. Massey, at that time Chief of the Historic American Buildings Survey; was supervised in the field by Denys Peter Myers, then Principal Architectural Historian of HABS; was carried on by Student Architectural Historian Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr., Boston University; and was continued by Alan Mast, Maine Arts and Humanities Commission, and Mary-Eliza Wengren (Mrs. Richard E., Jr.), Maine Historic Preservation Commission, under the field supervision of Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr. Photographers were Mark C. Bisgrove, Sylvester Cobbs, Stanley Schwartz, Leon P. Shepard, and Richard Dwight Sturgis.